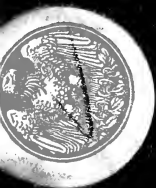


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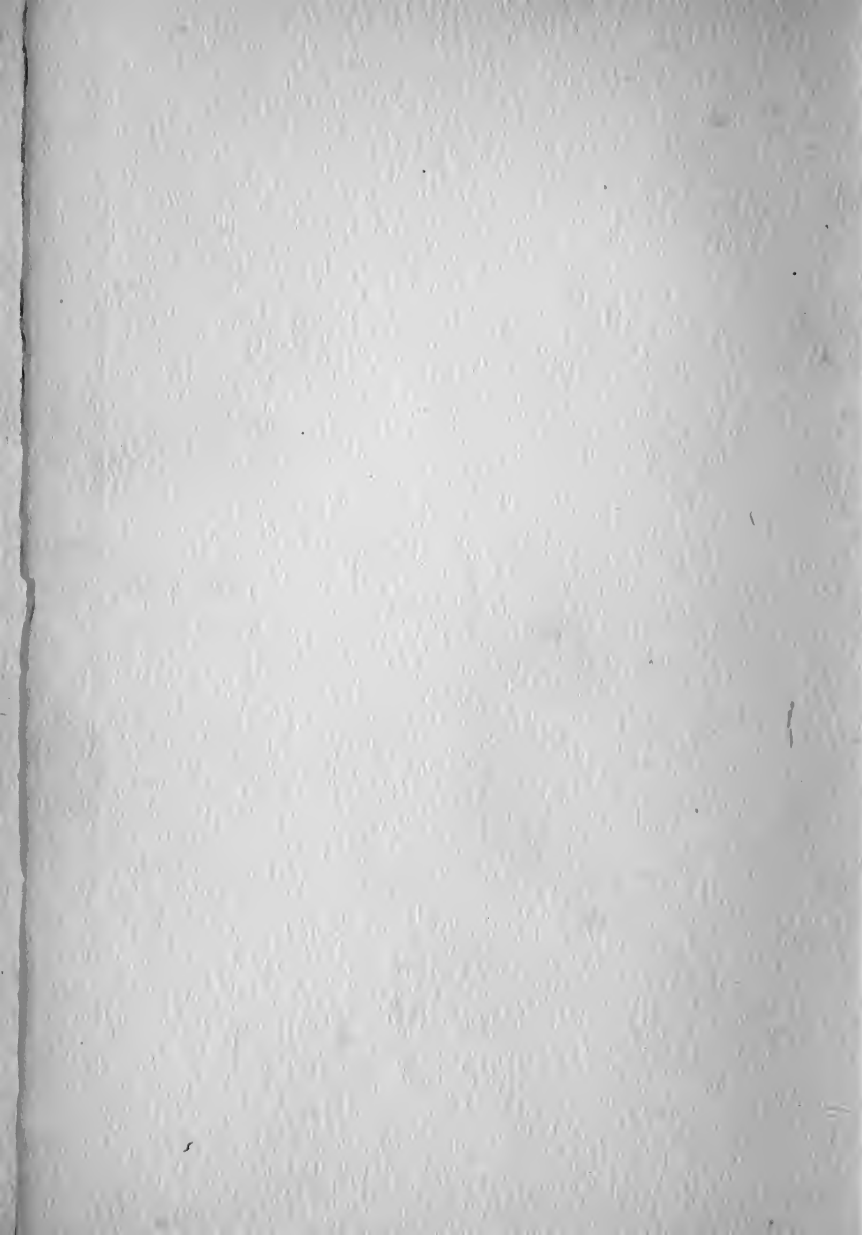
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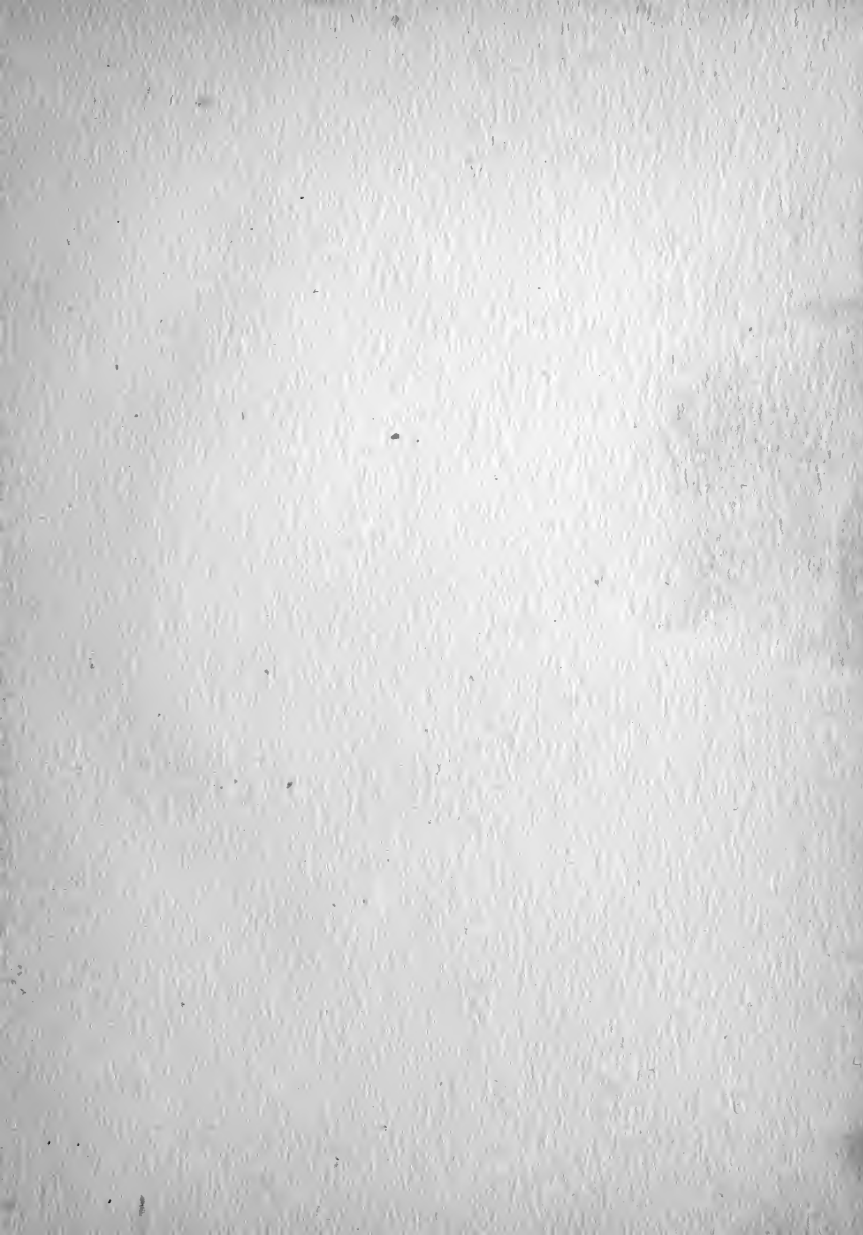
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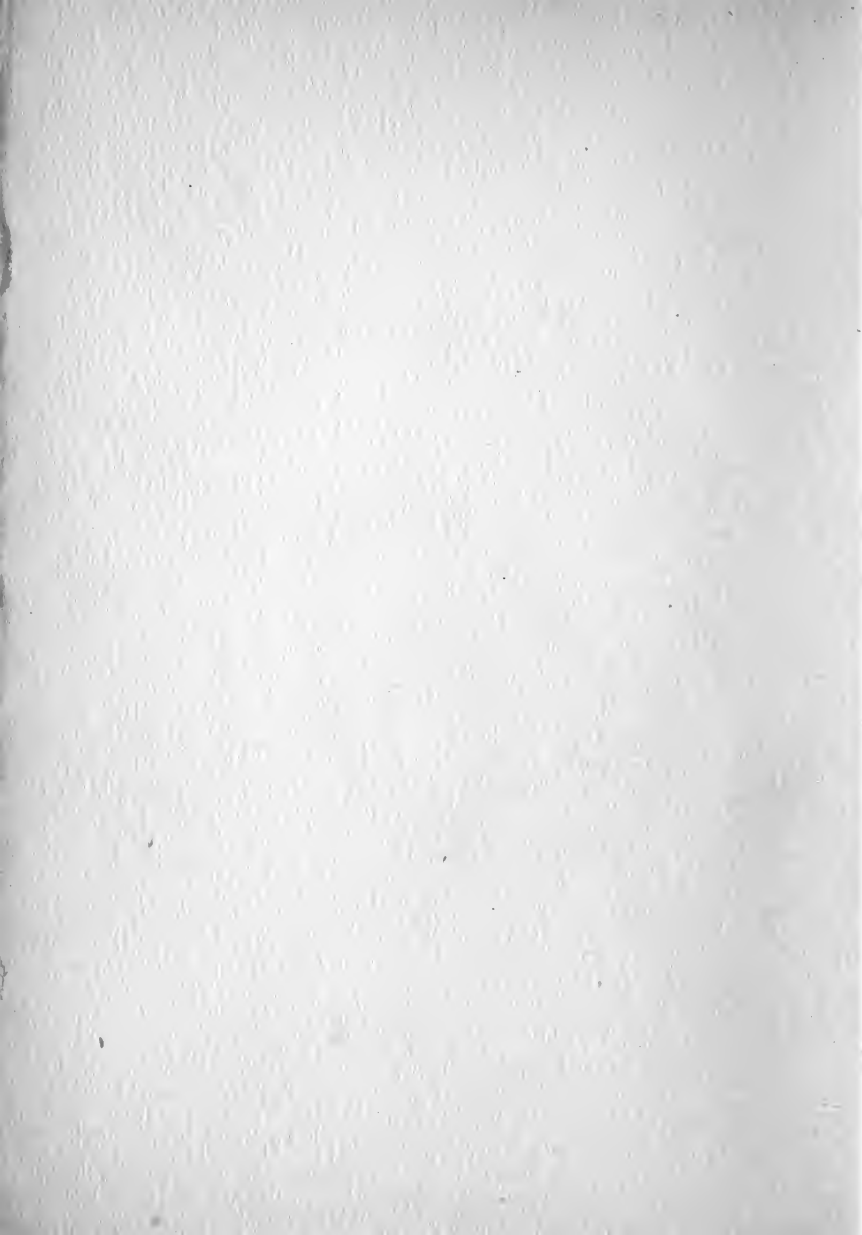
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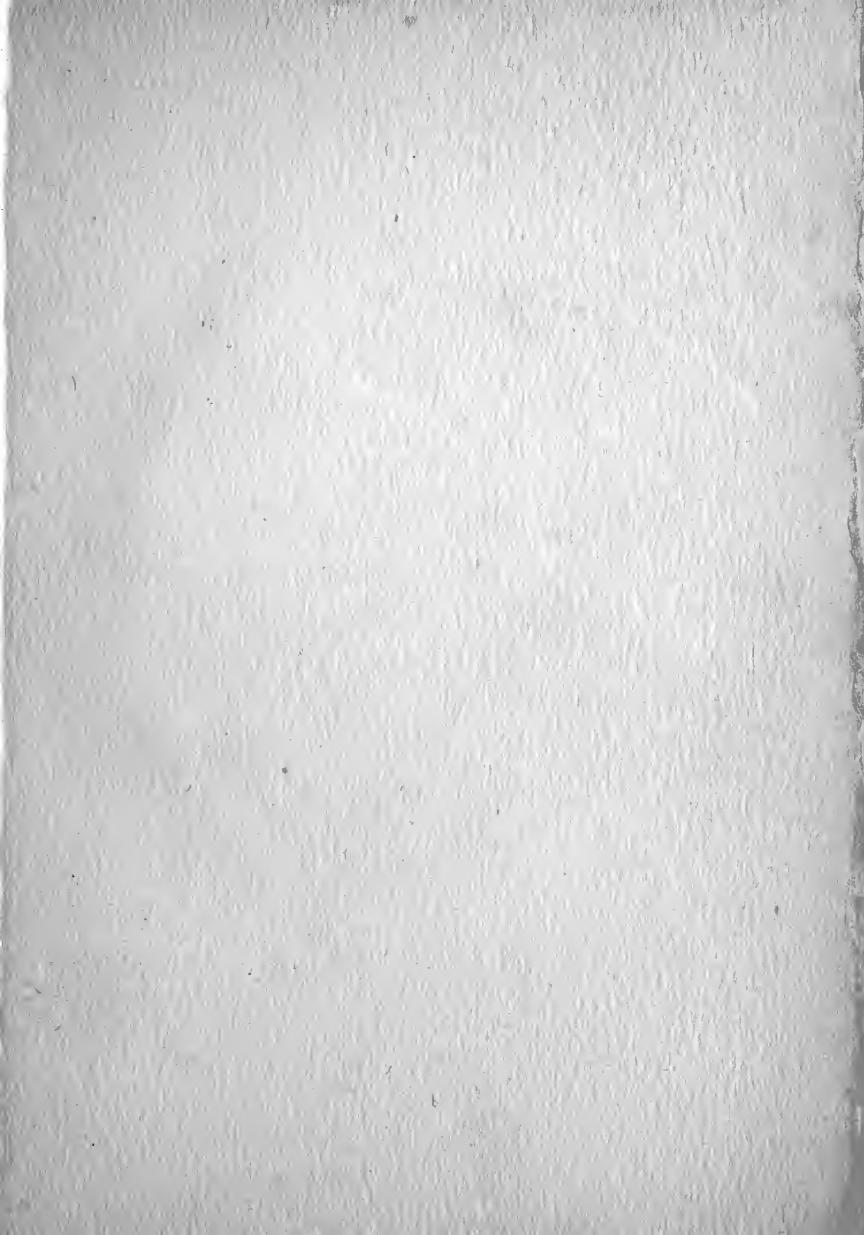












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Martin L. G. Bachman

Some
Poetry & Prose
by Nathan La Fayette
Bachman



Norman Hackett
Edward Van Winkle
Flatiron Building, New York

MCMV

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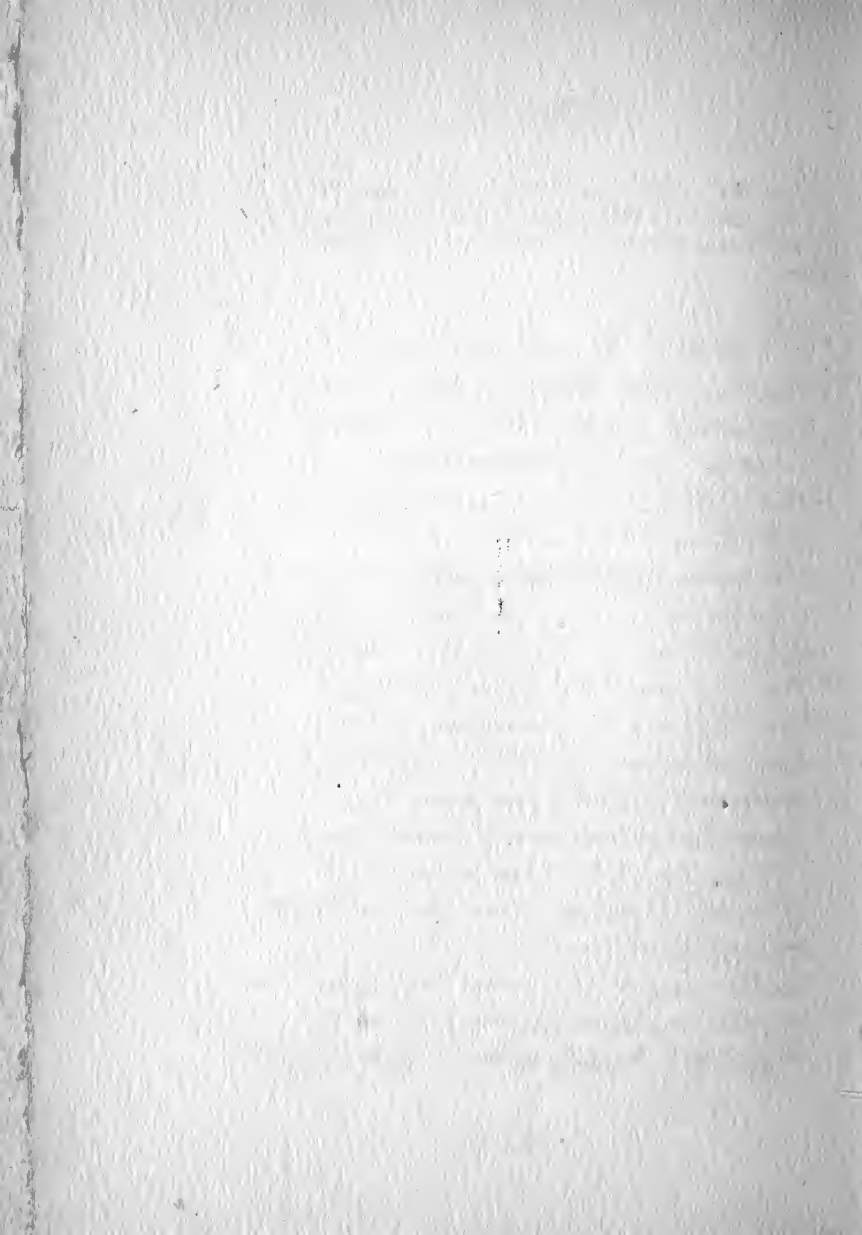


Inscribed

To ELIZABETH BACHMAN

THE DEVOTED WIFE
THE INSPIRATION OF

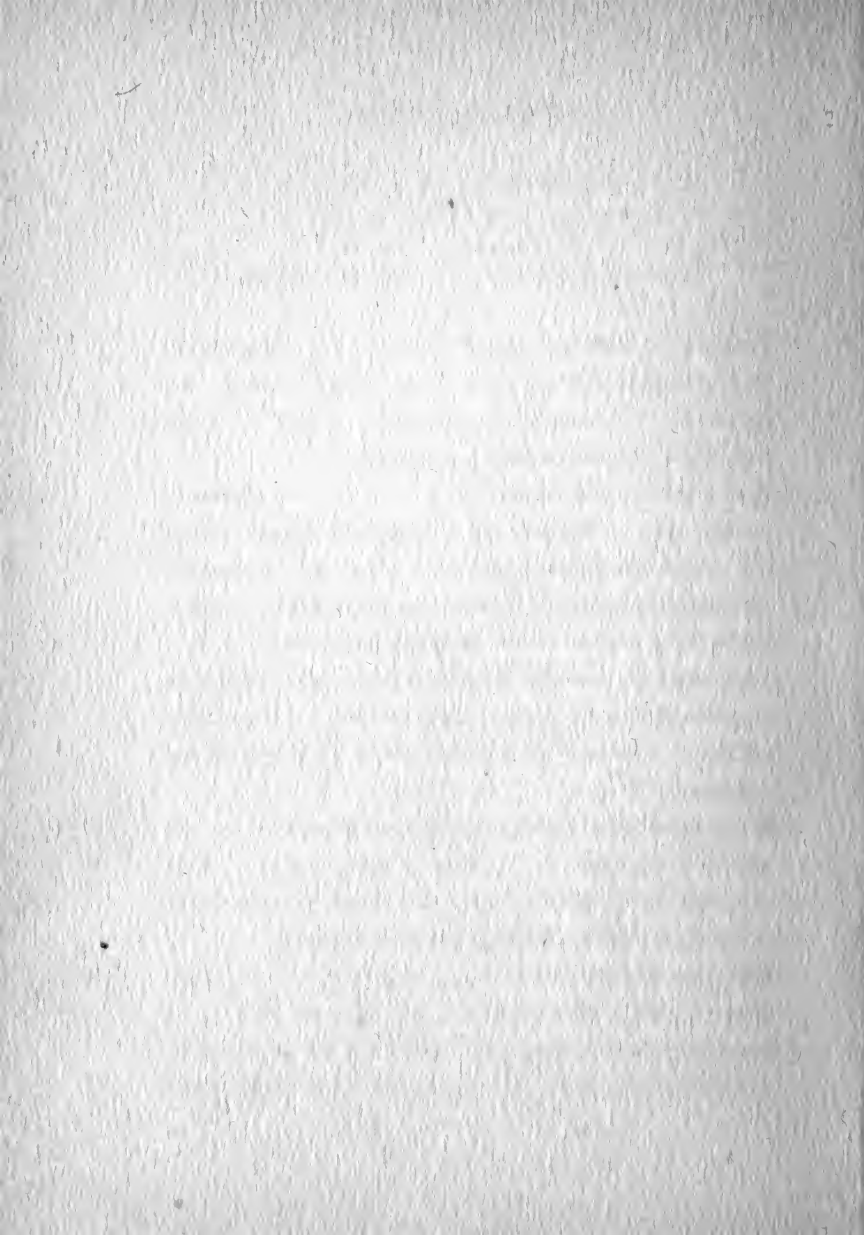
“MIZPAH”



PRELUDE

These lines were written October 8, 1883, upon the fly leaf of a copy of the late Marc Cook's poems. They seem singularly appropriate as a prelude to this collection of Mr. Bachman's own verses.

As in the bosom of some wildwood flower,
Poisons and honey lie mingled, while each breeze,
Redolent with perfumes, doth reveal its bower
To the keen senses of plundering bees,
That swiftly to its rich-hued portals come,
Deftly dispart the nectar from its heart,
And, bearing thence innoxious burdens home,
Leave all untouched that other—deadlier part ;
So here (for there are stored some precious words
That sadly voice this poor dead poet's worth,
Now merry with the twittering song of birds,
Again sad-scented with the grave's dank earth),
May'st thou naught but pure pleasure cull,
Sweeter than e'er embalmed immortal's breath ;
Of Love, if yet Life's radiant moon wax full,
Or waning to its curved sickle—sweets of Death.
Strange things we meet in such a book as this,
For life is strange. Ere its fleet hours elapse,
We love, we sing, we sigh,—and then we die !
What's left ? Forsooth, 'tis but a " Book of Scraps ! "



INTRODUCTION

“ Strange things we meet in such a book as this,
For life is strange. Ere its fleet hours elapse,
We love, we sing, we sigh,—and then we die!
What’s left? Forsooth, ’tis but a ‘Book of Scraps.’ ”

¶ It seems strikingly prophetic that in a commentary by our author on the late Marc Cook’s poems, we should find a sentiment so singularly appropriate to his own life as that expressed in the above lines.

¶ It is not our purpose nor is this the place to chronicle an estimate of Nathan La Fayette Bachman’s career and noble character; that has been done elsewhere. Our desire is rather to set down our reasons for compiling in this little volume a few of his thoughts—scraps, as it were—and for rescuing them from the great maelstrom of oblivion, for they are, insooth, all that is left to crystallize his memory and to assign him a place among the immortals.

¶ To those who become acquainted with him for the first time through the medium of these pages, a brief summary of his life may serve as a better understanding of the man and the influences that directed him.

¶ Nathan La Fayette Bachman was born in East Tennessee, April 3, 1848. At an early age he enlisted in the Confederate Army and served his cause valiantly throughout the war. He graduated with high honors

from Hamilton College and later from the Law School of Columbia University. Then followed a period of brilliant service as a lawyer and politician at Schoharie, New York. His health failing, he moved to Fresno, California, where he spent the latter part of his life. He died there on April 4, 1903.

¶ "Fate" Bachman was a prolific writer and a poet of unusual ability, but as he contributed exclusively to newspapers, his writings are not generally accessible. His reputation was confined almost entirely to California, where he was widely known under the *nom de plume* of "Bach," although several of his poems have been so extensively published and appreciated, that they have been accorded a place among the classics of American poetry by eminent critics.

¶ It cannot be denied that such a life was useful and illustrious. By his many friends—and their number was legion—it will ever be cherished as an honored memory, and we hope that this volume may enlist the interest of a larger public and increase the number of his admirers.

¶ With his academic education pursued at Hamilton College—that fine, old institution of learning, which has been the literary cradle of such men as Charles Dudley Warner and many other notable writers—it was but natural that Bachman's talents should have been fostered to the best advantage. But it is remarkable that he

should have developed later such a wide range of thought and expression. One had to know the man to comprehend the reason—he lived in sympathy with his fellow-men. He grasped their life impulses with an understanding that sounded the very depths of human nature. Endowed with a brilliant intellect and a naturally humorous nature, “his wit and wisdom fell like gems, coming from a great, buoyant mind that could no more hold them in check than the water of a river can be kept from washing to the sea.” His pen ran the gamut of human expression, and his writings bear the stamp of his own forceful individuality. With apparent ease he leads his readers to the heights of sublimity or to the planes of infectious mirth.

¶ A Southerner by birth, his breezy, generous nature readily adapted itself to the broad spirit of the Golden West, and gave to much of his verse a characteristic touch of the native son. Whenever his sense of justice was aroused, his cynicism became trenchant and severe. His moments of pathos were beautifully tender and human, while his prose descriptions were vitalized by exquisite imagery and delicacy of diction. Of the great mass of writings he contributed to the press, much was only of passing note, dealing as it did with current events. Our aim has been to select only the best products of his mind, while at the same time endeavoring to present a sufficient variety of material.

¶ The direct object of this publication is the founding of a memorial scholarship, the beneficiary to be Mr. Bachman's son, Harry.

¶ With these purposes briefly stated, we surrender our efforts to the kindly consideration of all who peruse these pages. The task has been a labor of love, which we respectfully consecrate to his memory, together with this "Book of Scraps," to aid in perpetuating the fruits of his intellect.

NORMAN HACKETT
EDWARD VAN WINKLE

CONTENTS

	Page
I. Victor of Marengo	1
II. In the Winter-Time of Year	6
III. Monday Morning	9
IV. A Briton's Toast	10
V. Memory's Hall	12
VI. The Way They Used to Do It	14
VII. "Mizpah"	16
VIII. Christmas Invocation	18
IX. Cracklin' Bread	20
X. Old Times	24
XI. Cucumis Sativus	26
XII. The Depredating Hen	27
XIII. Der Katzenjammer	28
XIV. Take Me Home	30
XV. What It Means to Have Been a Soldier in the Civil War	32
XVI. A Four-head Article	35
XVII. Our Stars Shall Tint with Light	36
XVIII. A Winter Idyl	38
XIX. There Comes a Time	40
XX. The Waters of Marah	42
XXI. At Rest	44

THE VICTOR OF MARENGO

¶ This remarkable essay, which is still quoted in the schools and colleges of this country and England, as an example of pure diction, thought and construction, was written by Mr. Bachman in 1872, while a senior at Hamilton College. The story of its origin is best told by himself in a letter to a friend, from which we quote the following lines :

¶ “ ‘The Victor of Marengo’ is the child of spleen. Our temporary tutor liked me not, because I had been a ‘Johnny Reb.’ He subjected me to petty annoyances which I resented. When appointed one of the four prize speakers of my class (1872), I furnished him selection after selection, all of which were rejected on one pretense or another. Finally I presented a defense of the South and next day found the tutor had deliberately given it to another contestant, and we had a row in which I forcibly informed him that he was the victim of a truth-famine not surpassed since the death of his ancestor, Ananias. The college rules required me to file my selection by the next day—the same to be approved by the professor—or else I was barred. When I left the professor, I was ‘hot’ enough to fry tar out of the pine boards of the sidewalk, and while walking the mile down to my rooms in the village, I composed ‘The Victor of Marengo,’ filed it with the tutor next morning, refusing to give the name of the author, as that would have barred it, and captured the first prize on it. It is patchwork—historical as to the matters of the battle, save the drummer-boy incident. The foundation of that is another battlefield of Napoleon’s, but at Marengo the gamin was all gammon.”

¶ Napoleon was sitting in his tent. Before him lay a map of Europe. He took four pins and stuck them up—measured—moved the pins—and measured again. “Now,” said he, “that is right. I will capture him there!” “Who, sir!” said an officer. “Melas, the old fox of Aus-

tria. He will retire from Genoa, pass through Turin and fall back on Alexandria. From the summit of St. Bernard I shall cross the Po, join him in the plains of La Scrivia and conquer him there!" and the finger of the Child of Destiny pointed to Marengo.

¶ Two months later the memorable campaign of 1800 began. The fifteenth of May saw Napoleon on the heights of St. Bernard. The twenty-second, Lannes with the army of Genoa held Ivrea. So far all had gone well with Napoleon. He had compelled the Austrians to take the positions he desired—he had reduced their effective army from 120,000 to 40,000 men—he had dispatched Desaix on the right, and June 14, moved forward to consummate his masterly plan. But God thwarted his scheme. In the gorges of the Alps a few drops of rain had fallen and the Po could not be crossed in time. Melas was shut up in Alexandria. On the right and on the left the mountains held him in check. Behind him, on the crest of the Apennines, Suchet and Masséna sat. In front the Conqueror of Egypt—Napoleon. Pushed to the wall by Lannes, Melas had determined to cut his way out and the battle was begun. He crossed the bridge of the Bormida, threw his troops into line upon the banks of Fontanone, that narrow, sluggish, ditch-like pool that separated the two armies. On this side stood the best, the bravest, aye, and the bloodiest sons of Austria, and at their head Melas,

grown gray in battlefields. On that, the gray moustaches of France led on by generals whose faces Egyptian suns had bronzed. Lannes was there, who but a few days before had won a Dukedom at Montebello. And Victor, but for whose charge with the fifty-seventh regiment, Lodi and Arcole, together with the names of Ney and Murat would have stood alone in history—Victor, whose valor at Mantua christened his regiment The Terrible, which won the title again at Austerlitz—and still again, twelve years after Mantua, at Tann Marmout. Champeaux and Kellerman were there. And Napoleon was there—there to see Lannes beaten, Champeaux dead and Kellerman still charging. Old Melas poured his Austrian phalanx on Marengo till the Consular Guard gave way and the well-planned victory of Napoleon was a terrible defeat.

¶ Just as the day was lost, Desaix, the boy general, sweeping across the field at the head of his command halted on the eminence where stood Napoleon. There was in his corps a drummer-boy—a gamin—his name, Frolut, whom Desaix had picked up on the streets of Paris. He had followed the victorious eagles of France in the campaigns of Germany and Egypt. As the column halted, Napoleon shouted to him: “Beat a retreat!” The boy did not stir. “Gamin, beat a retreat!”

¶ The boy stepped forward, grasped his drumsticks and said: “Sire, I do not know how. Desaix has never

taught me that. But I can beat a charge! Oh! I can beat a charge that would almost make the dead fall into line! I beat that charge at the bridge of Lodi once. I beat it again when the tall-plumed Mamelukes bore down on Kléber's squares at the Pyramids. May I beat it here?"

¶ Napoleon turned to Desaix who came dashing up the line:

¶ "We are beaten—what shall we do?"

¶ "Do? Beat them! It is only three o'clock—there is time enough to win a victory yet. Up, Frolut. Beat the old charge of Lodi and the Pyramids!"

¶ There was no waiting for orders from the First Consul, for the drum was rolling the "death march." A moment later the corps, following the sword-gleam of Desaix and keeping step to the furious roll of the gamin's drum, swept down upon the hosts of Austria. The smoke of the cannon had filled the valley and they swept down into it and out of sight. Napoleon sent a courier to Desaix and he sent him back with the message: "Go tell the First Consul that I am charging!" and then he hurled his gallant host upon the foe. They rolled the first line back on the second—the second on the third—and there they died. Desaix fell at the first volley—fell with "Charge!" on his lips—but the line never halted. As the smoke lifted the gamin was seen in front of the line—marching right on and still beating the furious charge. Over the dead and the wounded,

over the breastworks and ditches, over the cannon and the batterymen he led the way to victory—and “The Fifteen Days in Italy” were ended.

¶ When the battle was ended, Savary, the aide-de-camp and friend, wandered over the field in search of Desaix. He found him where the dead lay thickest, his naked sword grasped tightly in his hand, and just beyond him the gamin with a drumstick in one hand and the other clutched wildly at the air, his side torn terribly with a shot. And thus it was that these two of “the staff,” who had done so much to give Italy back to France, slept on the oozy banks of Fontanone.

¶ Today men point to Marengo in wonderment. They laud the power of foresight that so skilfully planned the battle; but they forget that Napoleon failed. They forget that he was defeated. They forget that a general—only thirty years old—made a victory out of the Corsican’s defeat and that a gamin of Paris put to shame the Child of Destiny.

II

IN THE WINTER-TIME OF YEAR

The beautiful snowflakes are taking a ride,
Jack Frost is driving the car.
He gives a flush to the cheek of Pride,
Warns Poverty deeper in rags to hide,
Bids age draw nearer the fireside—
“’Tis the Winter-time of year.”

There’s a merry shout in street and hall;
Could a king with a boy now peer?
Miss Shoddy is out with her India shawl;
Fashion is planning a Charity Ball;
Greed wonders if stocks will rise or fall—
“’Tis the Winter-time of year.”

E’en Jamie dreams he’s a boy! But, no!
’Tis many and many a year
Since “Bonnie” and he built men of snow—
Nor thought of sorrow—nor dreamed of woe:—
“She died,” he murmurs soft and low,
“In the Winter-time of year.”

Dreaming he sits by the fireside,
Dreams over a faded rose,
And memory flits o’er Life’s swift-tide,
Reveals his joy all magnified,
Ere the darksome rival claimed his bride
With the first of Winter’s snows.

Back from the misty realms of time,
Back from the years agone,
Faintly I catch the ringing rime,
And hear the chorus and hear the chime
Of olden songs, of strains sublime,
Like carol of birds at dawn.

Ever I hear them, soft and low,
Harping with music sweet,
Songs we loved in the long ago
Rippling their liquid ebb and flow,
The cadence echoing to and fro
Like the fall of fairy feet.

There are faces the heart will ever hold,
And smiles I remember yet.
There are flowing locks of sunset's gold,
There are parted lips of purest mould.
The songs they sang will never grow old,
Nor the heart will ever forget.

Ballads by boyhood and girlhood sung,
When chords were sounded full well,
When hopes were buoyant and hearts were young,
When fairy bells in day-dreams swung,
And, as roar of sea in sea-shells, rung.
A witching, magical spell.

'Tis all recalled by a faded rose,
Yellow with Age's rime—
Yet sweeter than those the spring-time blows,
For she who gave it doth repose
Beneath a winding sheet of snows,
Now dreams 'tis Winter-time.

“Ah well ! ah well ! 'Tis a story past
That I may not tell again !
'Twas a joy too like the rose to last,
Whose fragments down to earth are cast,
By careless hand or ruthless blast,
As gentle as summer rain.”

And so will the dreamer dream and sing
Till life's last moment flies,
The past up to the present bring :
Forget the Winter in dreams of Spring,
And wake to find the birds that sing
Are the birds of Paradise.

III

MONDAY MORNING

One half the world is wringing wet,
Or on the lines a-drying ;
That so the seven days smirch may get
A weekly purifying.

A smoke goes up through all the air,
And dims its summer glory ;
Like that which doth the torment bear
Of souls in purgatory.

Vainly to shun the tax, we seek,
In penance for our sinning ;
One day is forfeit from the week,
To make a clean beginning.

For, gathering stain on as we go,
Type of our shame and sorrow,
White robes we wore but yesterday
Are in the suds tomorrow.

Ah ! life without and life within,
In unison consenting,
Six days contracting toil and sin !
One, washing and repenting.

IV

A BRITON'S TOAST

¶ This poem was read at a banquet given by a coterie of Englishmen at Fresno, California, November 9, 1887, in honor of the birthday of the Prince of Wales. It was afterward printed on satin and sent to the Prince, now King Edward VII, who conveyed an appreciative acknowledgment to Mr. Bachman.

Where'er beneath the bending skies,
On natal day you ope'd your eyes,
 You'll grant me this—
A memory lingers in each heart,
At thought of which the tears will start :
 A mother's kiss.

In alien lands perchance we roam,
We make some alien land our home,
 Through fortune's plays—
Yet in that sacred vase, the heart,
Lie memories, with which none would part,
 Of boyhood days.

Born 'neath the world-known Union Jack,
Some days will call your memories back,
 To times gone by—
When Britons buckled on for war,
And made a name for Trafalgar
 That cannot die.

Torn Waterloo was made the grave
Of many a noble heart, and brave,
 A Briton born !
That fateful field drenched with its flood
Of glorious Anglo-Saxon blood,
 E'en Time can't scorn !

At Balaklava there were they,
Still marching onward in the fray,
 Nor could be stayed—
And Glory bowed her head with grief,
While Death, there, garnered in a sheaf,
 The Light Brigade !

Although renounced all former ties,
To England's crown, still love ne'er dies,
 For those who stay
Within her realm, our kith and kin—
While loyal here, hearts throb within,
 For those away.

So, here we meet in jovial bout,
To wile a merry evening out,
 'Twixt songs and tales—
Today all Britain is the host,
Let's drink, today, all Britain's toast—
 "The Prince of Wales !"

MEMORY'S HALL

Oh ! a strange, old castle is Memory's Hall
With its towers and turrets sublime,
For its portals are guarded by specters tall—
The specters of years, that come at the call
Of echoes that live in that clime.

It stands in the country of Long Ago
By the side of the river of time,
Whose waters surge on with an endless flow,
And sing a song as they gently go,
As soft as the vesper chime.

To the door of this castle we often go,
For we've buried our treasures there ;
There are brows of beauty, and hands of snow,
And forms we have clasped long years ago,
And tresses of golden hair.

Smiles that have faded, and joys now dead,
And faces we once thought fair,
And wreaths that encircled some loved one's head,
Words of tenderness once been said,
And robes that she used to wear.

Echoes of voices that used to call,
 Fall on the tremulous air ;
And pictures dim on its somber wall,
Scenes from the shadowy past recall,
 While we stand enchanted there.

The present departs, and the past returns,
 As we tread o'er its dusty floor ;
And the heart, overflowing with sadness, burns,
And the soul within us with mildness yearns
 For the things we loved of yore.

VI

THE WAY THEY USED TO DO IT

¶ These verses, written in 1885, are humorously characteristic of a rancher's dance, typical of the early settlers of Twin Lakes Cattle Camp, Alpine County, California.

Git yer little sage-hens ready,
Trot 'em out upon the floor.
Line up there, you cusses. Steady?
Lively, now! One couple more.
Shorty, shed that old sombrero.
Broncho, doust that cigarette.
Stop your cussin', Cassimero,
'Fore the ladies. Now, all set.

S'lute yer ladies. All together.
Ladies opposite the same.
Hit the lumber with your leather,
Balance all and swing your dame.
Bunch the heifers in the middle,
Circle stags, and do-se-do.
Pay attention to the fiddle,
Swing her round, an' on you go.

First four forward. Back to places.
Second foller. Shuffle back.
Now you've got it down to cases,

Swing 'em till their trotters crack.
Gents all right a heel and toeing.
Swing 'em, kiss 'em if you kin,
 On to next and keep a-going
 Till you hit yer pards agin.

Gents to center, ladies round 'em.
 Form a basket. Balance all.
Whirl yer gals to where yo' found 'em.
Promenade around the hall.
Balance to yer pards and trot 'em
Round the circle double quick.
 Grab and kiss 'em while you've got 'em,
 Hold 'em to it if they kick.

Ladies, left hand to your sonnies. °
 Alaman. Grand right and left.
Balance all an' swing yer honeys,
Pick 'em up an' feel their heft.
Promenade like skeery cattle,
Balance all an' swing yer sweets.
 Shake yer spurs an' make 'em rattle,
 Keno! Promenade to seats.

VII

“ MIZPAH ”

¶ Not being able to see his sweetheart, now Mrs. Bachman, before a hurried departure for the east, he wrote these few appropriate lines to her.

As I leave thee, thou fondest and fairest,
And take up this journey apart,
The tenderest wish, and the dearest,
Springs up to the lip from the heart.
It is “ Mizpah ”—that old benediction—
None older, none sweeter to me,
Than this : “ The Lord, our Preserver,
Keep watch between me and thee.”

Through moments of longing and hoping,
Our hearts throbbing quick from the fears,
That mist-like our pathways oft darken,
When grief shall break forth into tears,
When the trials of life shall beset us,
Our city of refuge shall be :
“ He wills it,—’tis well ! and we’ll trust Him
To keep watch between me and thee ! ”

Through days that are glowing with gladness,
When love lends its luster to life ;
When with radiance of smiles and of sunshine

Life's pathway with beauty is rife,
Though absent so far from each other,
Over mountains, the vale or the sea,
May the Author of goodness and mercy
Keep watch between me and thee.

As the Moslems turn always toward Mecca
Their faces and thoughts when they pray,
So, to thee, shall I turn while we're parted,
With this wish on my heart every day :
"May the Father in peace and compassion,
May the King of the land and the sea,
May He that kept watch over Israel,
Keep watch between me and thee !"

VIII

CHRISTMAS INVOCATION

Sweet peace to each and every one ! God's sweetest
peace and more !

May Christmas find no heartaches or sorrow at your
door !

May Heaven's richest blessing be on you each be-
stowed,

And Happiness and Joy bend back the thorns along
life's road.

And may this hallowed holiday to every heart unfold
Such treasures of His goodness, there'll scarce be room to
hold

His overflowing bounty ! May eyes, with tears bedim-
med,

Look up and through grief's murky clouds to find them
silver-rimmed.

And may, today, you gather 'round each joyous festal
board,

With hearts that pulse with thankfulness unto our com-
mon Lord.

Hail ! Master of the rich and poor ! Send benedictions
down

And bless, as only Thou canst bless, this people and
this town !

And not to us alone be these Thy benedictions given,
But to Thy children everywhere beneath the bending
Heaven.

Let kindly eyes and generous hearts with noble pity scan
The hungry, cold and naked of this Brotherhood of
Man;

And those Thou hast with plenty blessed, give them
the eyes to see

Where they may do the Godlike act of Christian
charity;

And, seeing, do! Then, conscious of a noble duty
done,—

Repeat the prayer of Tiny Tim,—“God b’ess us, every
one!”

IX

CRACKLIN' BREAD

New Year's Day has come and gone,
It brought mem'ries back to me,
The happy days of boyhood
Back in old East Tennessee ;
The plantation all in humor
Just to celebrate the time,
And the negroes all a-grinning,
With a grin that was sublime ;
Cornshuckings and hog-killings
Furnished spareribs for them all ;
And, I swear, it makes me hungry
When that feasting I recall ;
For when she had the supper ready,
Mammy Lucy—long since dead—
Topped off the whole caboodle
With that good old cracklin' bread.

Ah ! that sable queen, I see her
On her culinary throne,
With her two hands patting "juba"
As she shapes the corn-meal pone ;
Slaps it in the glowing baker—
Fire beneath and on the lid—

Was there ever so much sweetness
In such narrow limits hid?
Next comes the baked fat 'possum,
With its checkerboarded hide;
And the steaming sweet potatoes
In profusion on the side;
And the sweet milk, cold and creamy,
Right from out the spring-house shed;
And then, ye gods! the manna—
That good old cracklin' bread.

You may praise the roasted turkey,
With the scarlet cranberry sauce;
Goose stuffed with sage and "ingens"—
Best you ever come across—
Sucking pig with roasted apples,
Or the chicken fricassee,
And you don't provoke a craving
Of the appetite in me.
But here in my New Year's musings,
I recall with youthful zest,
The days when my digestion
Was the chief thing I possessed;
And I hold the heaven-sent manna,
On which Israel's children fed,
Couldn't begin to hold a candle
To Mammy Lucy's cracklin' bread.

Yes, I know we have the climate,
And the golden citrus fruit ;
And we have the milk and honey
And the ruby wine to boot ;
We've raisins and the luscious grapes,
Such as were never seen,
E'en by the scouts that Moses sent,
To spy Palestine ;
We've venison in the mountains,
And bear meat, too, galore ;
We've geese and brant and ducks and quail—
What can one want for more ?
Sure, the good things crowd upon us
On the land and overhead ;
But still we're short on 'possums,
And that good old cracklin' bread.

Where are ye, men and brethren,
Who were boys along with me ?
Who are ye, here in Fresno,
Born in old East Tennessee ?
You who breasted well the battle,
Following hard on those good days ;
You who heard the musket's rattle,
You who saw the cannon's blaze ;
Do you know that New Year's been here—
Yet it didn't seem just right.

Must be that change of climate
Works a change of appetite ;
For all that old-time feasting
Seems like mem'ries of the dead.
There's no New Year's without 'possum,
And that good old cracklin' bread.

OLD TIMES

There's a beauteous song on the slumberous air,
That drifts through the valley of dreams ;
It comes from a clime where the roses were,
And a tuneful heart and bright brown hair,
That waves in the morning beams.

Soft eyes of azure and eyes of brown,
And snow-white foreheads are there ;
A glimmering Cross and a glittering Crown,
A thorny bed and a couch of down,
Lost hopes and leaflets of prayer.

A breath of Spring in the breezy woods,
Sweet wafts from the quivering pines ;
Blue violet eyes beneath green hoods,
A bubble of brooklets, a scent of buds,
Bird warblers and clambering vines.

A rosy wreath and dimpled hand,
A ring and a slighted vow—
Three golden links of a broken band,
A tiny track on the snow-white sand ;
A tear and a sinless brow.

There's a tincture of grief in the beautiful song,
That sobs on the slumberous air,
And loneliness felt in the festive throng
Sinks down on the soul as it trembles along,
From a clime where the roses were.

We heard it first at the dawn of day,
And it mingled with matin chimes,
But years have distanced the beautiful lay,
And its melody floweth from far away,
And we call it now Old Times.

XI

CUCUMIS SATIVUS

The cucumber days have come, the deadliest of the
year,

Where flatulence and gripe abound, and cholera draws
near ;

When sudden death to stalk the street familiarly is seen
Disguised in shape of oblong fruit tricked out in bottle
green ;

And, loaded down with stylish grief, comes plodding in
his wake

The doleful undertaker, who delights to undertake.

Not sparsely scattered are his deeds—not few and far
between—

The fatal cases credited that gentleman in green.

Whether he southward bends his course, or northward
takes his way,

A million tearful mothers put their darling's toys away,
And hie them to the marble man whose every chiseled
sob

Doth wrong the "cuke" by crediting the angels with
the job.

XII

THE DEPREDATING HEN

Of all the things in nature that afflict the sons of men,
There is nothing that I know of beats the depredating hen;
If you see a wild-eyed woman firing brickbats from a shed,
You can bet a hen has busted up her little flower bed.
She plunders and she scratches, she cackles and she hatches,
And forty thousand cowboys couldn't keep her in a pen—
She was sent on earth to fret us, to excoriate the lettuce;
She's a thoro'-going nuisance, is the depredating hen.

I threw a brick and missed her as she hustled out my beans,
But Julius Cæsar's statue was smashed to smithereens;
I saw her digging rifle pits where I'd put my pansies in,
I fired a good-sized rock and hit my gardener in the shin.
She busts all bounds and shackles, she giggles and she cackles,
She makes me say some earnest things I haven't time to pen.
I never used bad language, but now I'm filled with anguish,
Alas! I broke the record thro' that depredating hen.

But now throughout my cabinet there floats a pleasant smell,
And the reason for that perfume it isn't hard to tell,
For when I rose this morning, saw my cabbage bed a wreck,
I caught that devil's comforter and I neatly wrung her neck.
I hear her fizz and crackle, no more she'll scratch and cackle,
Or make my summer garden look like some hyena's den.

She far too much has bossed me, she far too much has
cost me,
I'll eat at luncheon time today a hundred dollar hen.

XIII

DER KATZENJAMMER

Die Nacht war dunkel as der grave,
But, oh, nicht halb so still,
Der Musik welch' dose fiddlers gave,
Der Luft mit Laermen fill.
Upon dot fence die Katzen run,
Und singen mit voll might,
Yet spide of all dies' herrlich fun,
I've got der "plues" tonight.

Dose lofely sounds of Natur fail
To cheer mein traurig' Brust,
Des Mondes Schimmer, suess und pale,
Tonight gibt keine Lust;
I don'd know vat to make of dis
So awful Lonesamkeit,
Am gestern war ich froh mit bliss,
I've got der "plues" tonight.

Der Stimmen of des Maedchen's Lied,
Kein fiddle's well-toned lays,
Ein Beer macht keinen Unterschied,
Nought can my spirids raise.

Der sweedest dings vot Dichters tell,
My soul's deep Dunkelheit
I don'd pelieve dey can dispel,
I've got der "plues" tonight.

Warum is all dis pizness dus?
Und all dis Herzensweh?
Vielleicht I bedder not discuss,
De cause in dis sad lay;
For, if de Wahrheit now must come,
Und show my Hertzen's blight—
Am gestern war ich auf ein "bum"
I've got der "plues" tonight.

XIV

TAKE ME HOME

¶ Written June 13, 1900, apropos of the murder of Governor Goebel at Frankfort, Kentucky.

Take me back to old Kentucky,
Where the crystal waters glint
As they dance along their borders,
Through the fragrant beds of mint ;
Where the lasses and the horse
Are but terms for grace and speed,
And the whiskey and the statesmen
Both are noted for their "bead."

Take me back to old Kentucky,
Where strong waters flow so free ;
Where they cool off in the summer,
'Neath the spreading julip tree ;
Where the "high balls" and the "low balls"
Always hit the center square ;
And you never have "next morning"
Rheumatism in your hair.

Take me back to old Kentucky,
Where the blue-grass decks the hills ;
Where they have no use for water,
Save for operating mills :

For they scorn it as a beverage,
On that dark and bloody ground,
As they claim—e'er since the Deluge—
That it tastes of sinners drowned.

Take me back to old Kentucky,
To the state where I was born ;
“Where the corn is full of kernels
And the Colonels full of ‘corn.’ ”
Where to disapprove that beverage
Is to toy with sudden death,
And they have a bonded warehouse
Where they barrel up their breath.

Take me back to old Kentucky,
Let me hear the pistols pop,
See the pigs and politicians
With their snouts eye-deep in slop.
Take me back to those blue mountains
Where they argue points with lead ;
But you needn't rush the matter :
Take me back—when I am dead.

*WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE BEEN A
SOLDIER IN THE CIVIL WAR*

¶ To the man who measures his worth in blood and scars, that flag means something—whether he wore Blue or Gray. It is something to have been a soldier—on either side. It is something to have marched all day long through rain and sleet, your knapsack and blankets on your back with spider and cup tied fast—your canteen ready and with rifle and forty rounds of cartridges in your box—just for ballast—with plenty of holes in your shoes just to let in the water—and plenty more to let it out—while the tough, red-clay mud hangs on to them with all the persistency of a bad reputation—with hair unkempt and face unshaven,—“forward march,” the whole day long, unless detailed to help lift a wagon or piece of artillery out of a mudhole—with bread and meat for breakfast, meat and bread for dinner, and for supper, the sweet but unsatisfactory memory of how good they tasted,—and when thus wearied and worn, to see a battery of flying artillery go wheeling and thundering into position right in front of your line, and then, when the very minutes seemed hours, to hear the command to fix bayonets and forward in the face of a perfect hell of shrapnel, under whose fierce heat your lines melt away.

It is something to have stood on the field of conflict when bursting shells and leaden death hurtled through the air and comrades were dropping on every side in obedience to the enemy's messenger of death ; where the cries of the wounded welled up through the night and the pale moon, breaking through the rifted clouds, looked down upon faces paler than its own—faces across which had passed the ghastly shadow of an eternal eclipse. It is something to have seen the waving lines advancing to the charge—to catch the glittering sunshine upon a forest of steel—to have seen all the sights and heard all the sounds of mortal strife—something sublime, yet terrible. It is something to have been a soldier inspired by duty unto daring and to death. But grandest of all and beyond description is the thrilling sight when riding right into the enemy's ranks to have seen the flag you love and fight for, burst through the veil of smoke that wreathed it like a halo of glory—dazzling the vision as the vapory wreath is wafted aside—and to have heard the wild, exultant cheers of your comrades, all following where its eagle pointed the way—to death, perhaps, but certainly to victory and glory.

¶ What a thrill of inspiration to deeds of daring there is in that shred of silk or bunting ! What an incentive to valor is there in its mute appeal to do or die ! “Bring the Flag back to the line !” shouted a timid commander at a moment when victory wavered in the balance.

“Damn you, bring the line up to the Flag!” was the grand and glorious response. And it is such an experience, mutually shared, that has cemented into a sacred and inseparable union, as comrades and brothers all, the men who wore the Blue, and the men who wore the Gray, and above them floats the banner of their mutual choice to which their united defense is pledged—the Stars and Stripes.

XVI

A FOUR-HEAD ARTICLE

Come, grasping trader, off your perch ;
Observe the warning bell ; then
hie you to the nearest
church and heed
the parson
well.

He'll welcome you, and while you try
to think on joys above—think
likewise that, quite
frequently you
bogus dollars
shove.

Think likewise, while he pounds the Book,
and counsels ladies 'round—
twelve ounces, by no hook
or crook, can
ever make a
pound.

That warning blast last Thursday night,
should teach the veriest chump
to quickly turn from wrong
to right, e'er Gabriel
sounds his
trump.

XVII

MARCHING SONG

¶ Written for the Theta Delta Chi Fraternity, while a student at Hamilton College, and still the most popular song of that society. We extract the following introduction from Mr. Bachman's own writings :

¶ In my freshman year there was a call for a song from the Psi for the Theta Delta Chi song book published by Welsh, Bigelow & Co., of Cambridge, Mass. (1869), under the auspices of the Xi charge, and several members of our charge submitted verses to the Xi. I suppose my experience in saving the Southern Confederacy suggested the idea of a marching song. I had no idea of contributing anything, but in going "down the old hill" one evening en route for hash, I put in that long mile in rhythmic parturition and the following is the "produce" as accepted and printed—page 113, viz. :—

Air: "*Tramp, tramp.*"

Our stars shall tint with light the sullen clouds of night,
Until friendship's twilight glimmers in the sky,
Telling of the coming day and of shadows chased away,
By the cheerful rays of Theta Delta Chi.

Chorus

Theta Delta Chi shall be the anthem,
Cheer up, brothers, let's be gay ;
Let the world wag as it will, we'll be gay and happy still,
We'll be Theta Delts forever and a day.

With our shields we will oppose the fierce onset of our
foes

And like heroes chant the watchword and reply,
Standing ever firm and true to the black, the white and
blue,

And the chosen sons of Theta Delta Chi.

CHORUS

As the life tide rolls along we will cheer our hearts with
song,

And we'll banish e'en the griefs that make us sigh ;
And when years have rolled away and we've grown both
old and gray

We will still be true to Theta Delta Chi.

CHORUS

The ruthless hand of Time shall grave deep upon the
brow,

And shall dim the luster of the love-lit eye ;
But our hearts by age unstrung will be tuned again and
young,

When we drink a health to Theta Delta Chi.

CHORUS

XVIII

A WINTER IDYL

The summer breeze no longer blows,
The leaves drop off the vine :
'Tis now that Winter blows its snows,
'Tis now that I blow mine

The north winds, with prophetic roar,
Now howl across the hills :
The howl that interests me more
Is, how'll I pay my bills?

Through summer vesture—none too good—
Jack Frost may nip my frame :
My summer shoes let in the mud—
That symbol of my name.

Now, well-wrapped Beauty makes her calls,
Or brews a faddish tea :
She has *entrée* to all the balls,
While I'm confined to three.

No prince by accident of birth,
Nor nymph of bosky wood,
Nor any soul top-side of earth,
Shall beat me feeling good.

No zephyr's hush, or northwind's rage,
Or frosts or fiends annoy,
I still have man's best heritage,
My romping, rascal boy.

XIX

THERE COMES A TIME

There comes a time when we grow old
And, like a sunset down the sea
Slopes gradual, and the night-wind cold
Comes whispering sad and chillingly ;
And locks are gray
At winter's day,
And eyes of saddest hue behold
The leaves, all dreary, drift away,
And lips of faded coral say—
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when joyous hearts,
Which leap as leaps the laughing main,
Are dead to all save memory ;
A prisoner in his dungeon chain,
At dawn of day,
Hath passed away ;
The moon hath into darkness rolled,
And by the embers wan and gray,
I hear a voice in whispers say—
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when manhood's prime
Is shrouded in the mist of years,
And beauty, fading like a dream,
Hath passed away in silent tears ;
And then how dark !
But, oh ! the spark
That kindles youth to lines of gold,
Still burns with clear and steady ray ;
And fond affections lingering, say—
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when laughing Spring
And golden Summer cease to be,
Again we don the Autumn robe
To tread the last declivity ;
But now the slope,
With rosy hope,
Beyond the sunset we behold
Another dawn with fairer light,
While watchers whisper thro' the night—
There comes a time when we grow old.

THE WATERS OF MARAH

Exodus 15 : 23

"Ave, et vale !" Midnight ! Rome's weird procession
Passed forth to funeral pyres. The torches' glare
Revealed on pallid lips the stern expression

Dead warriors wear.

Their swords are rust ! To dust their forms have
molded,

And who achieved the fight—or in it, fell—

Their very names Oblivion has enfolded.

"Hail, and farewell !"

"Hail, and farewell !" Such is the frail condition
Of earthly intercourse. We meet to part ;
Joy perishes in the rapture of fruition.

Alas ! my heart.

The flowers we gather wither in the grasping ;
On Beauty's cheek no fadeless lilies dwell ;
The hand we clasp grows throbless in the clasping.

"Hail, and farewell !"

"Hail, and farewell !" The smile of welcome beameth,
Brief, as effulgent, upon lovers' lips ;
In Hope exultant, Youth but little dreameth
Of Hope's eclipse.

Nor cares to think that Time, who looks so radiant,
Is disenchanting Fancy's magic spell ;
To dust dissolving all her fairy pageant.

“ Hail, and farewell ! ”

“ Hail, and farewell ! ” Oh, turf ! rest lightly o'er him,
Whose senseless form was once of sense full-fraught !
Dead as the loving hearts which hither bore him,

With grief distraught !

We trust his dust unto thy faithful keeping,
While bursting hearts within our bosoms swell ;
Within the “ low, green tent ” we leave him sleeping—

“ Hail, and farewell ! ”

“ Hail, and farewell ! ” 'Tis thus each short-lived
pleasure

Fades on the vision like a phantom wan :

We turn to gaze upon our new-found treasure,

And lo ! 'tis gone !

'Mid the delights that we so keenly covet,

Still are we startled by funereal knell !

“ Ave ! et vale ! ” Oh, my heart's beloved—

“ Hail, and farewell ! ”

XXI

AT REST

¶ These verses on the death of the late President Garfield, who passed away at Elberon, New Jersey, were written on the fly-leaf of a hymn book during a memorial service to the dead President at which Mr. Bachman delivered an address.

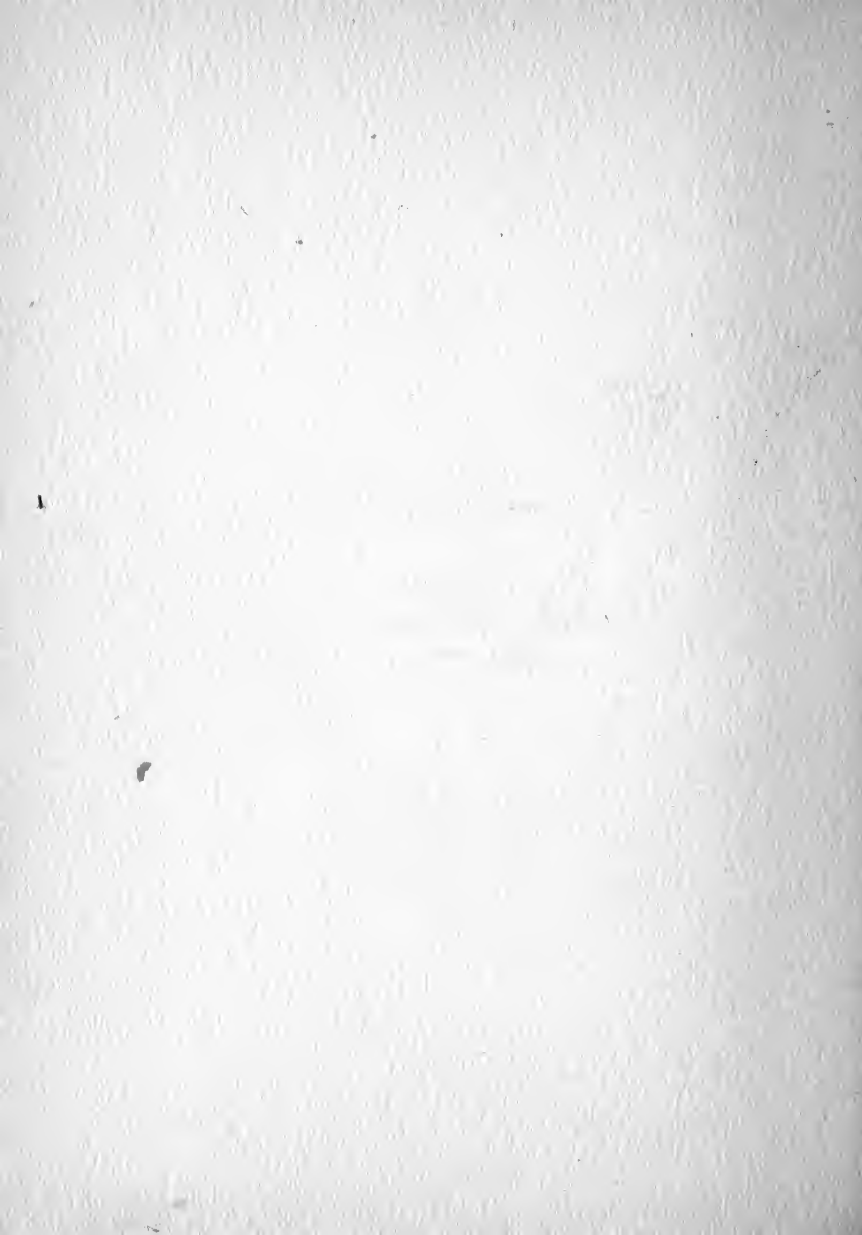
Toll on, thou bell of Elberon !
That called the people forth to pray
To God to staunch the wound and stay
The tide that ebb'd his life away.
His wisdom has not granted this,
And hushed at last in death's abyss,
Cold lips give back no answering kiss
To those bereft at Elberon.

Toll on, thou bell of Elberon !
Thou censer full of moans and sighs,
And tears that scald a people's eyes,
Swing neath the sad September skies,
Tell to the gales that 'round thee sweep,
The stars that sadly vigil keep,
How mothers wail and strong men weep
For him that died at Elberon !

Toll on, thou bell of Elberon !
Thy tongue proclaims our chieftain dead,
That breaking hearts at last have bled,
Of millions all uncomforted.
From belfry tower, near or remote,
There never swelled a sadder note,
Than wells up from thy brazen throat,
Sad funeral-bell of Elberon !

Toll on, thou bell of Elberon !
Today we lay him in the earth,
And gathered round a common hearth
The woe of millions proves his worth.
God's pity on the widow's head !
God's blessing fill a father's stead !
God's rest be on our dearer dead,
Who fell asleep at Elberon !

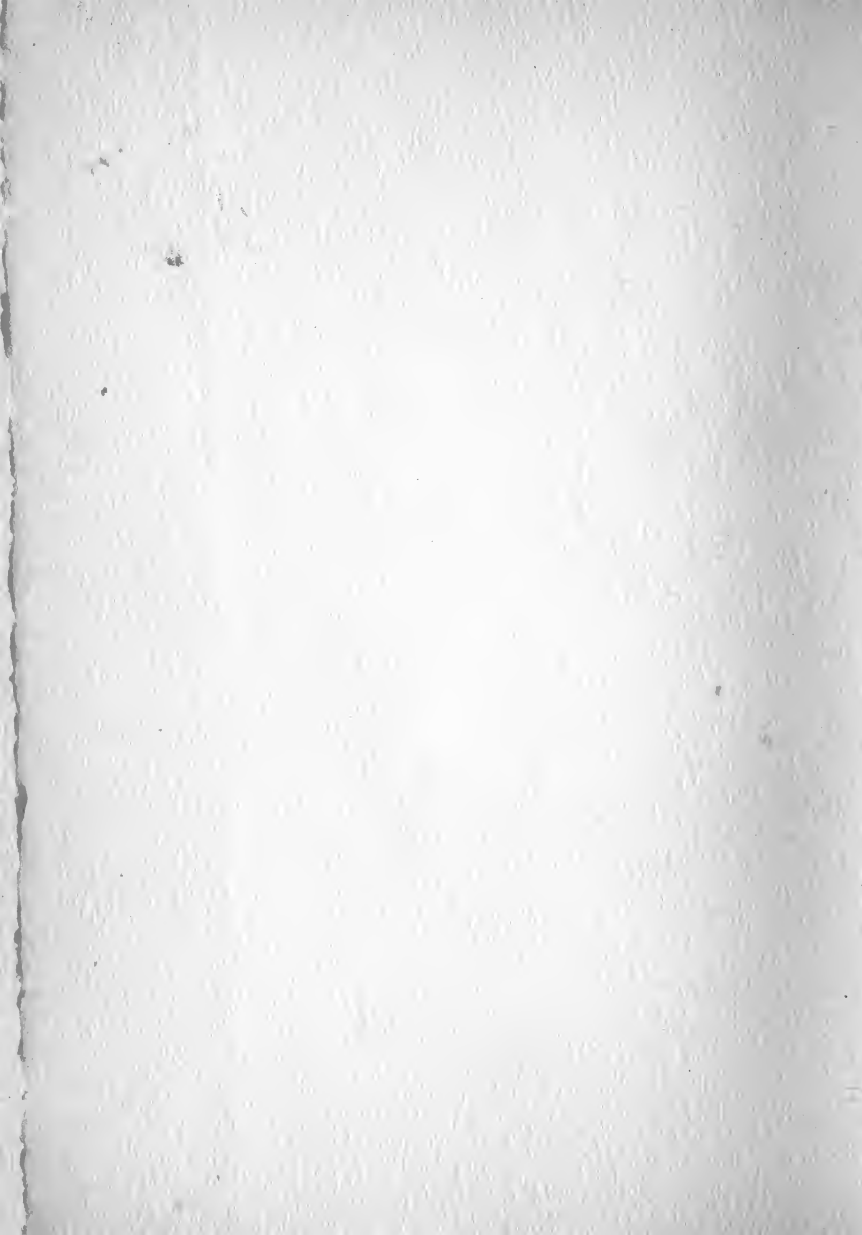
The End of the Poetry & Prose



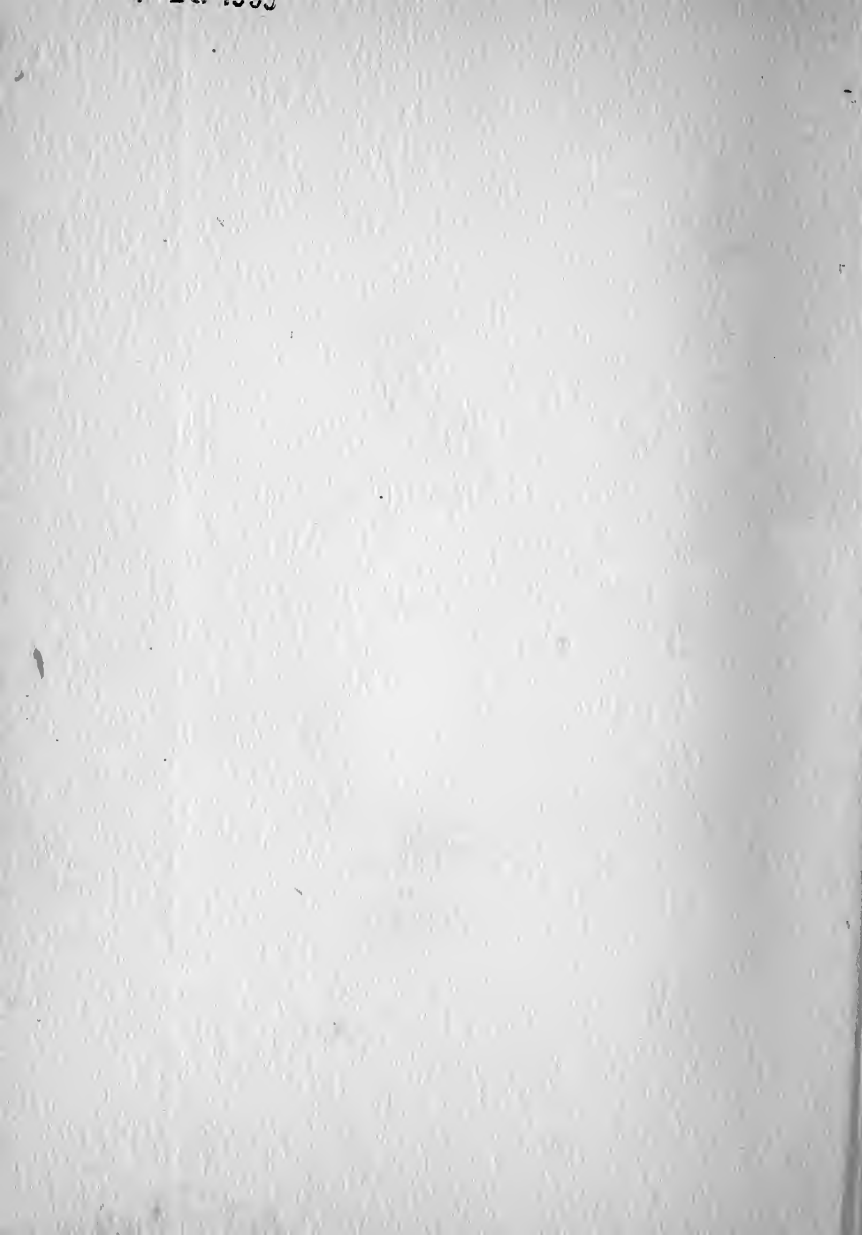
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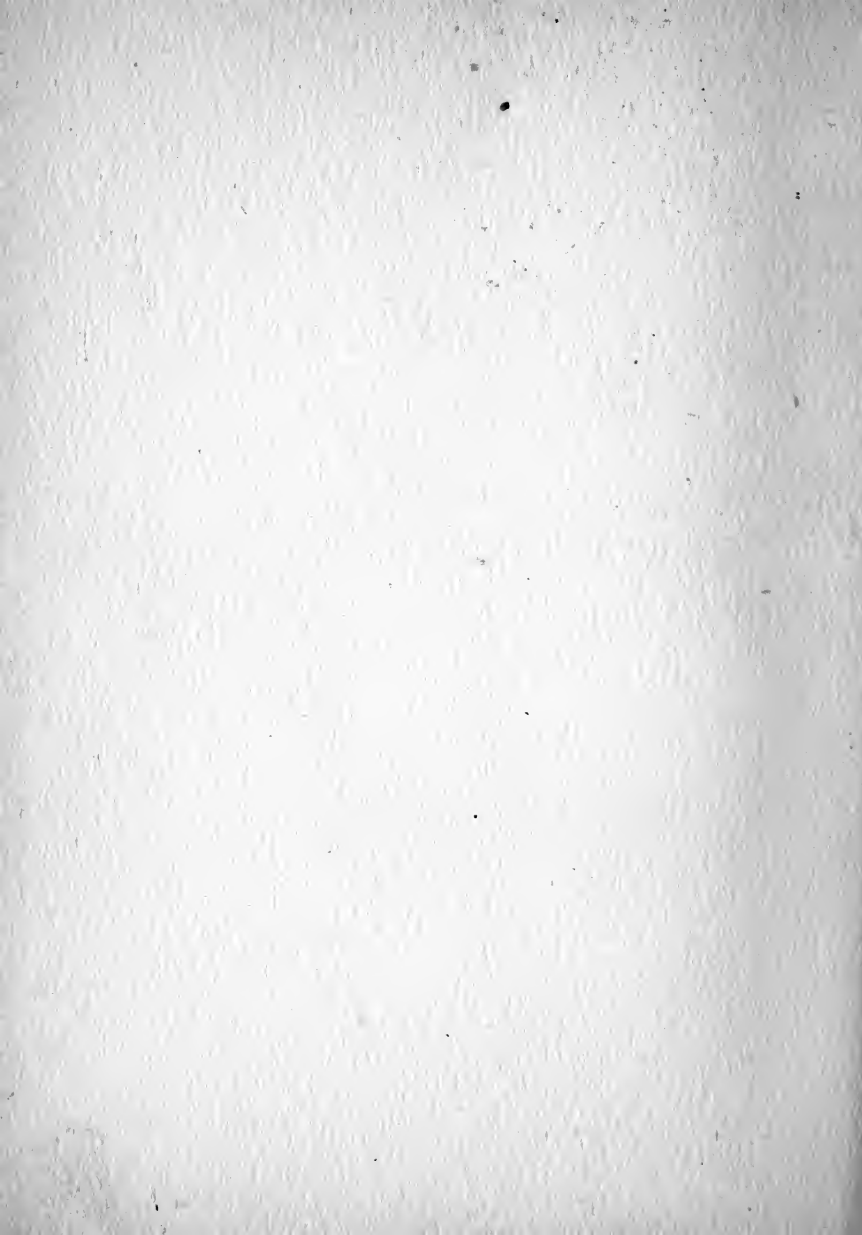
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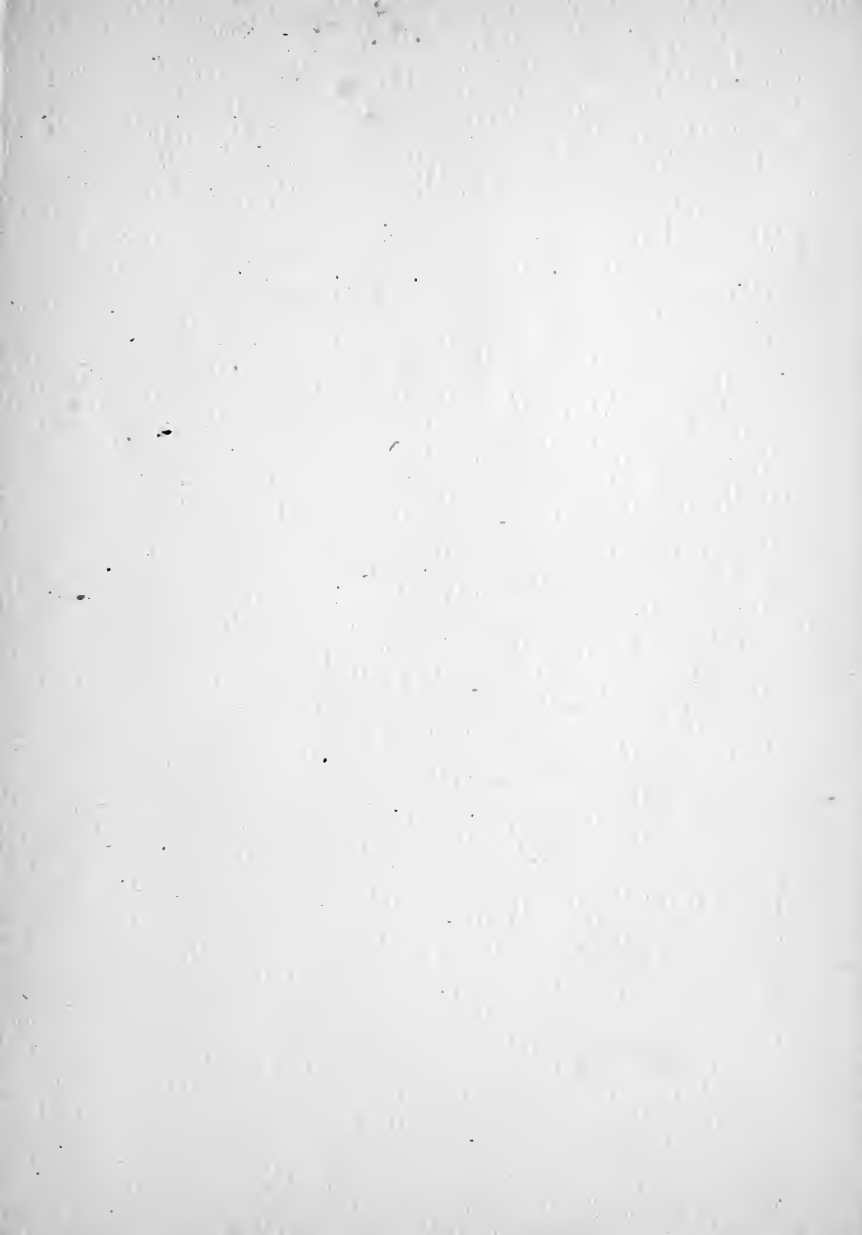


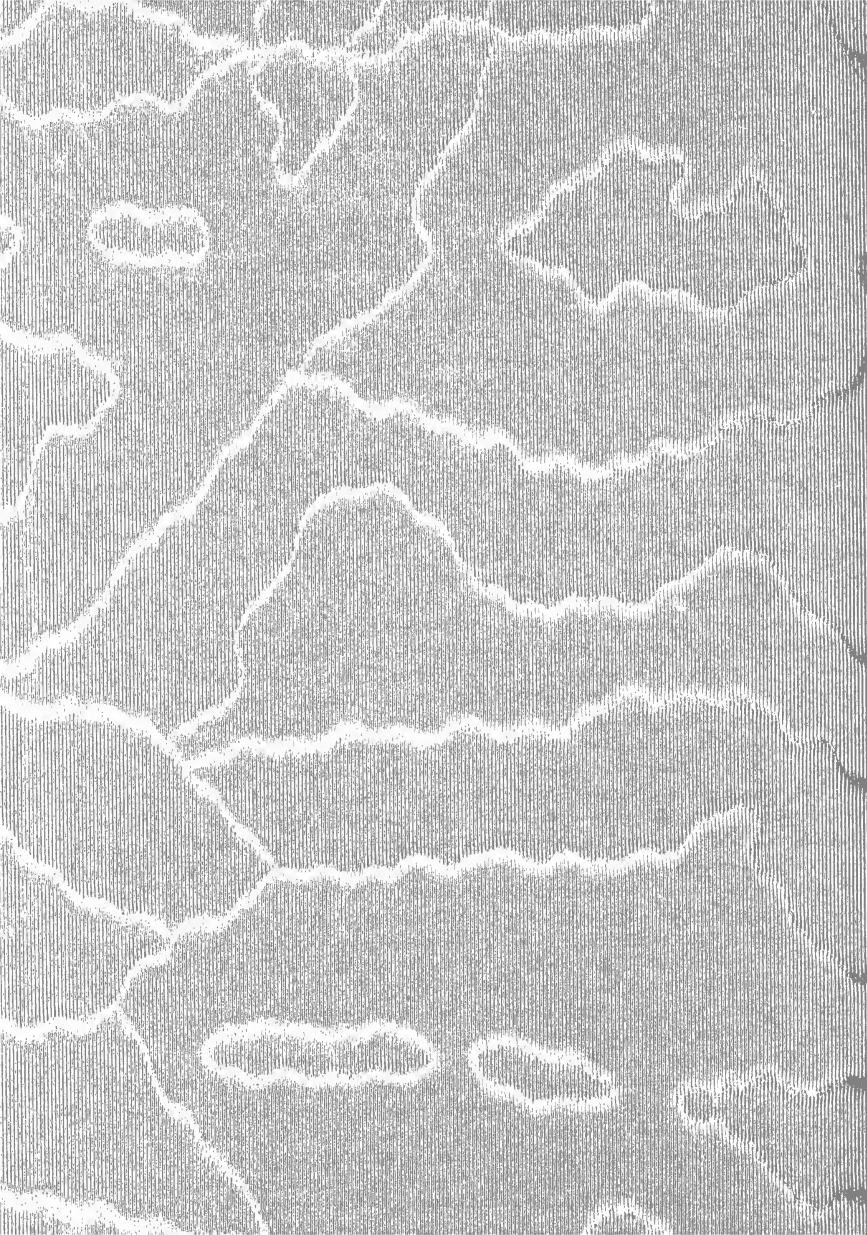












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